

Sept. 4, 1885-- The Landmark reports: "Mr. Mills, our enterprising bookseller has inaugurated a circulating library. For one dollar subscribers will secure a whole year's reading. The selections comprise histories, biographies, works of travel and novels, and are reckoned to be of a high order of excellence. Subscriptions are not being solicited, and we trust our people will subscribe. Anything that promotes the reading habit elevates the tone of society and improves the young. Prompt subscriptions to the requisite number will enable Mr. Mills to put in the library next week. Subscribers can draw books as fast as they can read them for an entire year."

1903/1904-- The first free public library referred to as a "Reading Room Library" in Statesville is started by Mrs. D. M Ausley, a member of the state library's extension committee of the State Federation of women's clubs according to an article in the *Statesville Sentinel* in 1917. "In 1903 seventeen years ago the first *Everybody's Day* celebrated in Statesville was for the benefit of the first free public library in Statesville. There had been subscription libraries previous to this. A large crowd attended the Day and many books were donated. A number of ladies and gentlemen were assistants for *Everybody's Day*, under the supervision of Captain Thomas Rowland conductor of the June Bug Railroad of the A.T. & O Railroad who is the gentlemen who calls, "Statesville the Best Town in the State." He gave it that slogan. He had a habit of calling out when the railroad reached Statesville "the best town in North Carolina." The proceeds of the celebration went to paper, paint, and help equip the large library rooms, which the late Dr. J.J. Mott, gave to Mrs. D.M Ausley, chairman, free of rent for the permanent use of the free public library and reading rooms for Statesville. Fundraising efforts had brought in \$143 for expenses, furniture and decorations."

Mrs. Ausley contacted the "Lend a Hand Library" in Boston and persuaded them to send books to stock a library. These books were kept in the upstairs rear of their home on Walnut Street accessible to the public by a flight of stairs on the